

Experimental Television Center History Reclamation Project Upstate Media Activity 1968-80

This partial chronology of media arts activities in Upstate New York is intended only to give a sense of the scope of the activity and its importance.

New York City Region

The following groups had direct and important connection to upstate media activity.

Commediation NYC 1968-69

Members: David Cort (Videofreex), Frank Gillette (Raindance, formed 1971), Ken Marsh (Woodstock Community Video) and Howie Gutstadt (Survival Arts Media). Interested in video as a tool for social change.

People's Video Theater NYC 1970

Co-founded by Howard Gutstadt and Ken Marsh. Other members: Judy Fiedler, Molly Hughes, Ben Levine, Richard Malone, Elaine Milosh, Richard Nusser. Other book sources cite Elliot Glass and Ken Marsh as founders. Interests included alternative video journalism, community video and social and political issues. Held regular screenings and discussions of tapes.

Videofreex NYC 1969

Members: Skip Blumberg, Nancy Cain, David Cort, Bart Friedman, Davidson Gigliotti (later associated with Elaine Summers and the Experimental Intermedia Foundation, funded by NYSCA in 1969 for media work), Chuck Kennedy, Curtis Ratcliff, Parry Teasdale, Carol Vontobel, Tunie Wall, Ann Woodward. In 1970 worked with Rochester Museum and Science Center with NYSCA support. Published technical information in *Dumpling Ground*, vol. 2.

The Kitchen 1971

Founders: Woody and Steina Vasulka, Andres Mannik. 1971 established a first annual video festival. Original location at Broadway Central Hotel which housed the Mercer Arts Center. . In 1973 moved to Broome Street. First funded through EAI. In 1974 Vasulkas moved to Buffalo

Earthscore c.1974-76

NYC and New Paltz. Paul Ryan, Bob Schuler, Steven Kolpan. Based on triadic relationship concepts; see *Cybernetics of the Sacred* (Ryan).

Hudson Valley/Catskills

Videofreex Media Bus

Lanesville 1971-79

Moved upstate to establish a genuinely alternative television system, the first low-power TV station, for a community. Broadcast a regularly scheduled weekly program "Lanesville TV" for and about the people of Lanesville. Members also served as producers of documentaries by and about other members of the community, as well as issues of personal interest. An example is Nancy Cain's tape *Harriet*. The Freex also conducted traveling workshops and performance events, and helped organize a regular (monthly?) telephone conference concerning technical issues; helped

link upstate region. Tapes listed in *Dumping Place* v. 2: Buckaroo Bart Show, Media Bus Story II, Spaghetti City Video Manual (series of tapes on repair and maintenance).; European Video Resources Tour (9 portable video projects in Europe- interviews and selections from their tapes). Maple Tree Farm was described as video resource center, with editing, open workshops and library. "The community is both video produced and video consumer. We work with video producers by giving technical assistance, funding information and production knowledge. We work with video consumers by providing different kinds of programming. Our video library, our workshop programs and the benefit of our experience are available to both producers and consumers". (*Dumping Place* v.2).

Woodstock 1979 -

Members Nancy Cain, Tobe Carey and Bart Friedman operated a post-production facility, with distribution and consulting services and also produced work, primarily for cable. Tobe Carey (1979-1984) was Director of TV Development.

Woodstock Community Video 1972-78

Founded by Ken Marsh. Members: Barbara Buckner, Bob Dacy, Gary Hill, Steven Kolpan, Elaine Milosh. Interested in alternative programming for cable, and served as a production center for cable programs. Began Artists TV Lab, which moved to Rhinebeck in 1976. From 1975-77 presented Woodstock Video Expovision, a festival of NYS media artists. 1972-75 Tobe Carey served as Media Services Coordinator.

Artists TV Lab 1976 -1977

Rhinebeck. Gary Hill. Barbara Buckner, Steven Kolpan. Began as a project of Woodstock Community Video in Woodstock with Hill as coordinator for visiting artists. When moved to Rhinebeck, program no longer included visiting artists, but instead had founding members as artists in residence.

Open Studio Video Project 1977-1979

Barrytown. Gary Hill, David Jones, George Quasha. Started as part of Arnolfini Art Center (Rhinebeck), which was also a project of Open Studio, Barrytown.

April Video Cooperative

Dean and Dudley. Publication: *Dumping Place*, with distribution of at least 1,000. *People Vision* is vol. 2 of *Dumping Place*. (Undated, but after February 73). (Box AK, Downsville, NY 13755). NYSCA supported NY distribution. *Dumping Place* was a resource guide using categories: news, hardware, survival, political and cultural, goofs and feedback, calendar, contacts, other media networks, software and information needed. *People Vision* contains information on video groups throughout US. Distributed tapes "Downsville TV", "Cape May Composite", "The Rosebud Cafe" and survival tapes.

Amazing Grace Media

(PO Box 132m Wittemberg Rd., Bearsville, NY 12409) Listed in *Dumping Place*. "Sprouted this summer with a group of individuals spilling their seed into a Bearsville scene, fleeing city trips and feeling the need to form a garden group. Video, film and graphics are now flourishing, nurtured by strong sunlight and a growing composite (sic) heap. We are all farmers here..." (*Dumping Place*,

v.2). Met through April Video Conference in NJ and Republican and Democratic conventions, covered by TVTV and the Women's Video News Service. Tapes listed: Clear Light; TVTV Four More Years. Tapes from Japan and Formosa, Various Tapes from University Settlement Workshop.

Beryl Korot and Ira Schneider. Ruby, NY. Editors of Radical Software.

Mid Hudson Library System collection of tapes. (Videoscope v.1., no.2) 1984 with NYSCA created on-going Union Catalogue listing all independent film and video holdings in NYS.

Western Southern Tier

Survival Arts Media Jamestown

Formed 1972. Members: Gail Edwards, Howard Gutstadt, Molly Hughes, Ben Levine, Danny Luciano, Richard Malone. Functioned as a collective with interests in community education and health programs, multi-media shows and events.

Olean Public Library

1988 sponsor workshop on rural film exhibition during annual exhibition series "Rural Images Film and Video Festival". Jean Haynes.

Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System.

1984 NYSCA support to Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System to build circulating video art collection for WNY

Alfred University

Vegetable Soup Kitchen. Media Program. Harland Snodgrass.

Rochester

Visual Studies Workshop

Director Nathan Lyons. 1970 funds from NYSCA for equipment, perhaps film tools. 1973 established media center, with production facility, workshops and exhibition. Media Center coordinators: Wayne Luke, Laddy Kite, Arthur Tsuchiya, Nancy Norwood. *Afterimage* begins publication in 1973; offered some coverage of video. Publication by VSW of Videofreex Community Video book, in exchange for staff training in video by the Freex.

Portable Channel 1972

Directors: Bonnie Klein, Sanford (Sandy) Rockowitz, John Camelio, Robert Shea and Tim Kelly. A resource center with workshops, access and independent production work by members. Tapes listed in *Dumpling Ground*, including the Attica and Prison series. Technical modifications by Rockewitz published in *Dumping Ground* v.2. Larry Gale listed interest in collecting Kid's Tapes, made by children 4-16 years; would exchange for dubs.

White Ox 1973

Film production and equipment access center; also offered workshops.

WXXI-TV 1974-81

Television Workshop. Post-production for artists. Directors: Ron Hagell, Pat Faust, Carvin Eison. 1974-81 1973-74 NYSCA support for purchase of a time base corrector, allowing broadcast of small-format work.

1975 *The Electronic Image*, Homemade TV, by the Vasulkas.

Buffalo

Media Study Buffalo 1972-85

Founded by Dr. Gerald O'Grady. Exhibition coordinator John Minkowski. Extensive film and video screenings; workshops; equipment access.

Center for Media Study at the University of Buffalo

Initiated by Dr. Gerald O'Grady 1972. Faculty: Paul Sharits, Hollis Frampton, Tony Conrad, Woody and Steina Vasulka (74-80). Other faculty James Blue, documentary film, and Brian Henderson, film theory.

Hallwalls 1974 - present

Founded by Charles Clough and Robert Longo. 1977 funding from NYSCA for video exhibition and documentation of arts events. Installation: Video. works by Dara Birnbaum, Patrick Clancy, Wendy Clarke, Brian Eno, Ken Feingold, Dan Graham, Gary Hill, Sara Hornbacher, Shigeko Kubota. Kathryn High technical director, 1979-82.

Sunship Communications

First community cable access center in Buffalo.

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo 1978

Exhibition: *Vasulka: Steina - Machine, Woody - Description*, with catalog. Curator, Linda Cathcart.

WNED-TV

PBS affiliate in Buffalo. Broadcast of *Vasulka Video*, by Woody and Steina Vasulka, 1979.

Harald Bode- Bode Sound Company, Tonawanda, NY

Analog audio tool design engineer. Bode Frequency shifter and vocoder. Collaborated with Vasulkas. Tonawanda NY. Audio tool design engineer Harald Bode was born in 1909 in Germany. He formed the Bode Sound Company after moving to the Buffalo area in 1961. The Bode Sound Company marketed many of the original designs of Harald Bode including the Bode Frequency Shifter and Bode Vocoder. He published both individually and in collaboration, with such engineers and designers as Robert Moog, and his tools and devices are found in electronic music studios around the world. Bode also collaborated with Woody and Steina Vasulka in the design and integration of devices, and presented his work at the Audio Engineering Society, Media Study/Buffalo and the Experimental Television Center. Gordon Mumma referred to Bode as an "engineering hero" in the development of electronic music instruments.

Syracuse

Collaborations in Art, Science and Technology 1970

Director: Joe Scala. Patsy Scala.

Everson Museum of Art 1972

1972 funding from NYSCA helped to establish the first video department in a major museum. Museum Director was James Harithas. David Ross was the first video curator and left to become deputy director for film and television at Long Beach Museum of Art in 1974. Richard Simmons became curator in 1975. Department closed in 1981.

Innervision 1970

Founded by Carl Geiger in 1970 to explore the computer-controlled video imaging system developed by Carl Geiger and Gerard Fountain. Access to this system was provided to a limited number of artists each year. A small stipend was provided. Post-production work was arranged through the Synapse Video Center at Syracuse University. - *Access Film and Video Equipment: A Directory*. Nancy Legge, 1978. Carl Geiger displayed custom-designed tools and systems at the conference *Video History: Making Connections*, 1998, at Syracuse University.

Synapse 1973-80

Formerly University Community Union Video; associated with Syracuse University. Offered high-end post-production for artists. Directors included Lance Wisniewski, Henry Baker. Others associated were Carl Geiger, Bill Viola (went on to run Art Tapes 22 in Florence, Italy) and John Trayna (became technician at Electronic Arts Intermix in NYC).

Syracuse Alternative Media Network 1983

A non-profit video production cooperative. It was formed in 1983 to produce documentaries and educational programs which would present an alternative viewpoint. SAMN produces and distributes documentaries which examine a variety of social problems. SAMN also provides production services to community groups and trains students and community groups in media production. SAMN endeavors to enable people to work for social change and justice through the illumination of structural problems of social causes. SAMN also teaches video production to grades 3-12 at several local schools. (*The State of Upstate*, *The Squealer*, 1996/97)

Southern Tier

Student Experiments in Technology 1969

Program begun by Ralph Hocking at Binghamton University. Offered equipment access to students, educators and the community. Forerunner of ETC.

Experimental Television Center 1970

Founded: Ralph Hocking. Initial name Community Center for TV Production. Staff: Ken Dominick, Sherry Miller, David Jones. Rich Brewster, Don McArthur. Also visiting artist Walter Wright. Programs included access to equipment, weekly cable program *Access Elliott Broadsky*

cable manager. Regular workshops for community and educational institutions. Early 70s Queer Blue Light Gay Video Revolution workshop held at the Center, organized by David Sasser. Exhibition series *Video by Videomakers*. Artist in Residence Program begun 1972; emphasis on electronic image processing. 1972 funding from NYSCA to construct a second Paik Abe Video Synthesizer for WNET-TV Lab; produced sections of *Suite 212* at the Center. Synthesizer performances by Walter Wright at locations around the State and in Canada. Collaborative project 1978 with Vasulkas to develop digital video tools using LSI-11 computer system, funded by NEA.

Binghamton University

Cinema Department, founded by Larry Gottheim. Faculty: Gottheim, Ken Jacobs, Ralph Hocking. Visiting filmmakers Peter Kubelka, Nick Ray, Dan Barbett, Saul Levine. Maureen Turim.

Rosebud Cafe

Delhi, NY. Founded c. 1973. "We are a group of people whose life long interest has been to be a part of a cohesive community. While many of us are from Delhi, the initial energy came from a group in Downsville called The April Video Cooperative. AVC is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to better community communications. Our major effort has been developing 1/2" videotape as a means to look at ourselves and our neighbors and to see exactly what is going on in our community. We have actively shown many people in many parts of the country not only how to integrate this means of communicating into their daily lives, but how to bring about change and better understanding of us all." Have library of 100 tapes, produced by community. Interests: 1. Cable access through Newhouse Cable Co. (Owned Delhi system) for public programming. 2. Public viewing center 3. Mobile unit with 1/2" equipment as a head end and community studio for cablecast for people living in outlying rural areas.

Finger Lakes

Ithaca Video Projects 1972

Director Phillip Mallory Jones; 1974 First Annual IVP Festival. This begins to tour in 1976. IVP founded 1971-84. Annual Video Festival 1975-84. Gunella Mallory Jones. Kells Elmquist.

Cornell University 1973

Cornell Cinema 1973. NYSCA support for film exhibition series.

Educational Communications. Support for Dan Reeves and Jon Hilton.

Fine Arts Library, Undergraduate, Cornell University. David Shearer. Interviews with video artists in 70s.

Central NY Programmers Group

1986 Founded by John Knecht and John Efroymsen. To help upstate exhibitors and educators develop circuits for independent film and video tours.

Independent Electronic Music Center

Trumansburg. Founded by Robert Moog and Reynold Weidenaar. C 1965 and 1966.

Cherry Valley, NY
Video and electronic music and performances by Paul Bley, Carol Goss.

Capitol District

Electronic Body Arts

Formed 1973. Founded by George Kindler and Phil Edelstein. Members: Maude Baum (video for dance), George Kindler (Media Director), Tom DeWitt and Vibeke Sorensen (video), Phil Edelstein (electronic music). Developed Pantograph, experimental digital tool for video and dance projects. Housed Pantomation studio at WHMY-TV, PBS affiliate in Albany, and later at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Utica College

Scott MacDonald.

WHMT-TV

Schnectady. Artists television workshop.

Albany Public Library Bob Katz, Media Librarian.

Crandall Library, Glens Falls.

1982 NYSCA support for independent filmmaker series. 1986 with NYSCA support organized "Premiere: First Conference on Film Exhibition".

Adirondacks

Lake Placid Center for Video, Theater and Music

ZBS Media Farm

Greg Shifrin and Pat Anderson. RD 1, Fort Edward NY 12820. 518 695-6406. "Alternative radio production, creation, inspiration, good vibes and self-development" (Dumping Ground v2)

Akwesasne Cultural Center

Hogansburg. 1985 NYSCA funded video workshops and tour of Native American films to community centers in Northern NY.